

THE
COZENERS;
A COMEDY,

WRITTEN by Mr. FOOTE,

PUBLISHED by Mr. COLMAN,

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]

THE

COYNER

A COMEDY

WRITTEN BY MR. FOOT

PUBLISHED BY MR. COLMAN.

[Printed and Sold by]

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THE
COZENERS;

A COMEDY,
IN THREE ACTS.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL in the HAYMARKET.

WRITTEN BY THE LATE
SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq. *L*

AND NOW PUBLISHED BY
Mr. COLMAN.

LONDON,
Printed by T. Sherlock,
For T. CADELL, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXVIII.

THE

CONFESSION

A COMEDY

IN THREE ACTS

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL IN COVENT-GARDEN

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR

SAMUEL JOHNSON

AND NOW PUBLISHED BY

MR. COLEMAN

LONDON

Printed by P. Sturges

For T. Cadell, in the Strand

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ADVERTISEMENT.

SOME copies of spurious impressions of this Comedy, and of the Maid of Bath, having been printed and circulated before the application to the Court of Chancery for an Injunction, it has been thought advisable, in vindication of the property of the Editor, as well as in justice to the deceased Author, immediately to commit to the press genuine editions of the two dramattick pieces above-mentioned, together with the Comedy of the Devil Upon Two Sticks, which had been also without authority advertised for publication.

On inspection of the spurious impressions, it appears, that all the errors of careless and ignorant transcribers are there religiously preserved; and all the additions and improvements, made by the facetious Writer, are omitted. Many instances of this will occur on perusal of this Comedy; in which, besides the restoration of several passages always spoken on the stage, the Reader will find a whole scene, at the end of the First Act, and another, still more entertaining
and

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and popular, at the beginning of the Third; both which were wholly wanting in the spurious Impressions.

Unauthorized publications are not only always detrimental to private property, but commonly prove injurious to the publick: For the copies, being obtained by clandestine and indirect means, are, for the most part, as has happened in the present instance, incorrect and imperfect.

PROLOGUE.

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P R O L O G U E.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mr. FOOTE.

IN trifling works of Fancy, wits agree,
That nothing tickles like a simile:
And so, by way of tuning you to laughter,
With which, I hope, you'll tickle us hereafter,
From our poetick storehouse, we produce
A couple, spick and span for present use.
Dramatick writers were, like watchmen, meant
To knock down Vice—few answer the intent;
Both should be quick to see and seize their game;
But both are sometimes blind, and sometimes lame:
Can those cry *stand*, while they themselves are reeling?
Can those catch thieves, while they themselves are
stealing?

When wanted most, the watch a nap will take—
Are all our comick authors quite awake?
Or, what is worse, by which they still come near 'em,
Are not you more than half asleep who hear 'em?
I, your old watchman, here have fix'd my stand,
On many a vice and folly laid my hand:
'Twas you cried *watch!* I limp'd at your command. }
Let me, like other watchmen, bless the times,
And take the privilege to nod betimes;
Nor let your frowns now force me on a fright
To cry—" *Past seven o'clock, and a cloudy night.*"

But, with your patience not to be too free,
We'll change the subject and the simile.
To chase a smuggling crew, who law deride,
We launch a cutter of three guns this tide:
With your assistance, we will make the foe
Sink, or submit to CAPTAIN TIMBERTOE,
Ye pirate criticks, fall not foul on me!
If once I sink, I founder in the sea.
In this condition, can I swim to shore?
I'm cork'd, 'tis true; but then I want an oar.
You oft have sav'd my little bark from sinking;
I am no fish, save me from water-drinking!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Mr. AIRCASTLE,	<i>Mr. Foote.</i>
TOBY,	<i>Mr. Weston.</i>
Mr. O'FLANNAGAN,	<i>Mr. Bannister.</i>
COLONEL GORGET,	<i>Mr. Aickin.</i>
FLAW,	<i>Mr. Wilson.</i>
TOM,	<i>Mr. Fearon.</i>
MOSES MANASSES,	<i>Mr. Burton.</i>
ROGER,	<i>Mr. Griffith.</i>
HELLEBORE,	<i>Mr. Baddeley.</i>
PRIG,	<i>Mr. Parsons.</i>
Servant,	

Mrs. FLEECE'EM,	<i>Miss Sherry.</i>
Mrs. SIMONY,	<i>Mrs. Gardner.</i>
Mrs. AIRCASTLE,	<i>Miss Platt.</i>
BETSY BLOSSOM,	<i>Mrs. Jewell.</i>
MARIANNE,	<i>Mrs. Smith.</i>
Maid,	

T H E

THE
COZENERS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em and Flaw.

Mrs. Fleece'em.

NOT a word more! you put me out of all patience.

Flaw. Well, but, madam Fleece'em, listen, I beg, to a little reason.

Mrs. Fl. Reason? had you the least atom about you, you would rest contented with our present agreement.

Flaw. But surely, madam, a change of circumstances——

Mrs. Fl. Change? And pray, master Flaw, how are mine changed for the better? Answer me a few short questions, and deny what I say, if you can. When I was compelled, by the cruel laws of this country, to go into exile for

B taking

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taking by mistake a small parcel of lace out of a shop in the Strand, did not I choose Boston for my place of retirement?

Flaw. Granted.

Mrs. Fl. Did not I pass there, by means of letters from mynheer Van Smuggle of Rotterdam, for a person most honourably and nobly allied?

Flaw. For aught I know.

Mrs. Fl. Did not I receive a handsome present from that merchant, for promoting the running Dutch teas, and rejecting those imported from England?

Flaw. Like enough.

Mrs. Fl. Did not my burning the first pound of Souchong, and my speeches at Faneuil-Hall, and the Liberty-Tree, against the colonies contributing to discharge a debt to which they owe their existence, procure me the love and esteem of the people?

Flaw. May be so.

Mrs. Fl. And what, but your letters, could induce me to return to a country where I had been treated so ill? But sure, you must have forgot your proposals; here they are, and signed by yourself. Let me see!—[*Reads.*] “Articles of Agreement between Philip Flaw, of Thavies-Inn, in the city of London, on one
“ part,

THE COZENERS. 3

“part, and Felicia Fleece’em, late of Boston,
“but now of Pall-Mall.”

Flaw. But what occasion——

Mrs. Fl. “*Imprimis*, That the said Felicia
“do take a handsome house, at the West end
“of the town, with suitable servants; for the
“furnishing of which the said Flaw engages to
“procure her credit.”

Flaw. And have not I?

Mrs. Fl. “Secondly, that the said Flaw shall
“circulate, privately and publickly, in taverns,
“coffee-houses, Journals, Chronicles, Morning
“and Evening-Posts, and Courants, that the said
“Felicia is a person of great address and abi-
“lities; and that, by means of many powerful
“connections, she is able to procure posts,
“places, preferments of all conditions and
“sizes; to raise cash for the indigent, and pro-
“cure good securities for such as are wealthy;
“suitable matches for people who want hus-
“bands and wives, and divorces for those who
“wish to get rid of them.”

Flaw. And have not I performed every tittle?
have not my expences in attending plays, operas,
masquerades, and Pantheons, not to mention
subscription-money to most of the clubs, and
coteries, amounted to a most enormous——

Mrs. Fl. I am near at an end.—[*Reads.*]

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“That the said Flaw shall at all times advise
“the said Felicia how far she may go without
“incurring the law; for all which he is to
“receive out of the neat profits thirty *per cent.*”
—You see, Sir!

Flaw. I do.

Mrs. Fl. And don't you think *that* a very ample provision?

Flaw. But consider, madam, I have sacrificed my whole time to your business, and I don't believe the law has procured me——

Mrs. Fl. The law? What, a little, private agency at the Old Bailey? a wonderful sacrifice! fy, fy, Mr. Flaw!

Flaw. You are the last person, Mrs. Fleece'em, that should cast such a reflection as that: Unless I mistake, my attendance there was pretty useful to you.

Mrs. Fl. To me?

Flaw. Without my skill and address, your last voyage to America would have been changed to a much shorter trip.

Mrs. Fl. Sir!

Flaw. A tour to Tyburn, in a tim-whisky and two, would have concluded your travels.

Mrs. Fl. Why, you impertinent, infamous, petty-fogging puppy, it was through your ignorance that I was obliged to travel at all.

Flaw.

THE COZENERS. 3

Flaw. Mine?

Mrs. Fl. Did not Alick Alibi, before your face, at Blackwall, in the Transport, declare, that he never saw such a bungling business; that if he had been employed—

Flaw. Alibi?

Mrs. Fl. You know him, I fancy.

Flaw. Perfectly: As, madam, you think him so wonderfully clever, you had better employ him; I am ready to resign, in his favour.

Mrs. Fl. That is ungenerous in you, Mr. Flaw, to insult a gentleman under misfortunes: You know the clipping and filing affair compels him to keep a little private at present.

Flaw. Oh, then, that's the reason I am consulted? sweet madam, your servant! But, madam, I must desire you to find out some other agent: I declare off! you sha'n't make a stop-gap of me!

Mrs. Fl. Sir!

Flaw. Our accounts are easily settled: Let me see! Seven pounds seven shillings, from the brewer's clerk, who is gone with your commendatory letters to India.

Mrs. Fl. Nine pounds, if you please.

Flaw. Seven. The rest paid out of my pocket to Kitt Copywell, for manufacturing the letters from the directors.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Fl. Very well! Have you got the fellow aboard?

Flaw. Sailed the latter end of the week.

Mrs. Fl. Then there is the crimp's money, for procuring the company an able recruit.

Flaw. Already deducted, for promising to get Bob Blueskin a reprieve at the——

Mrs. Fl. These, Mr. Flaw, are but trifling affairs; they may be settled at some other time.

Flaw. I am ready, whenever you please: And so, madam Fleecee'm, I am your most humble, and very—— Oh! I had like to have forgot; if any thing should happen, that I may not be blamed, *in futuro*, I would advise you to take care of yourself: I overheard Luke Lockup, the turnkey, say, as you passed by in a coach, that he had some notion of having seen you before, and wanted much to know where you lodged.

Mrs. Fl. Luke Lockup? why, how is it possible he could——

Flaw. I know nothing of that: Foreseeing, indeed, that such a thing might possibly happen, I had provided a couple of people to prove that you were shipwreck'd on the Western coast; so that, though you were returned before your time from your travels, it was none of your fault;

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fault; but that is all over now; Mr. Alibi will, no doubt, take proper care.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, as to that, Mr. Flaw, there is no man living to whose care I would sooner trust myself than your own; but sure in this affair we have been both of us rather too quick. Let us coolly consider: I am sure, I am the furthest in the world from—— But come; let us know what are your further demands?

Flaw. I scorn, madam, to take any advantage: As our risques and labour are equal, an equal partition; that's all.

Mrs. Fl. I consent to the agreement.

Flaw. Very well. I will prepare a draft to lay before council; which, when approved, you will sign.

Mrs. Fl. Without scruple; that being settled, let us come a little to business. What new game have you sprung?

Flaw. Plenty, plenty; the family I expected out of the country is come.

Mrs. Fl. Father, mother, and son! have you seen them?

Flaw. I received their note but this instant: They have made a little mistake I believe as to their lodgings,

Mrs. Fl. How so?

Flaw. I advised them, at their coming to
town

THE COZENERS.

town to stay at one of the Hotels for a week or ten days; instead of that, they are got to a Bagnio.

Mrs. Fl. A Bagnio?

Flaw. At the sign of the Lamb, in Long-Acre.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, for aught I know, that place will best answer our purpose.

Flaw. I must step directly to the Salopian Coffee-House; Ensign Gaters is to send you a hundred for obtaining him a step in his corps. Here; I have brought you the complimentary cards to put over the chimney.

[*Gives her the cards.*]

Mrs. Fl. That's right. Let me see:—*The Duke of—best respects—Earl of—Viscount—*Ah, ah; very well! Have you prevailed on the coachman you mentioned?

Flaw. He has promised to parade before your house for an hour, after his master is set down at the Cockpit. A couple of servants to wait at the door, as if the great man was above, will be right.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A note, Sir, from a person below.

Flaw. Let us see it.—[*Reads.*] “Mr. O’Flanagan’s compliments to Mr. Flaw, and as he perhaps may not choose to be at home to him,
“being

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“being at another body’s house, begs to know
“where he may see him this evening.”—A
bagatelle; some trifling affair.

Mrs. Fl. You had therefore better dispatch
him at once. Shew him up.

Flaw. He brought me a commendatory
letter this morning; but I was in a hurry, and
desired him to meet me here about this time.
Here he is,

Enter Mr. O’Flannagan.

O’Flan. Mr. Flaw, I am your most humble
servant. Madam, I am yours unknown.

Flaw. Well, Mr. O’Flannagan, what are
your commands with me?

O’Flan. Oh, Mr. Flaw, we will postpone
that, if you please: I hope I am a little better
bred than to mention any thing of my private
affairs before ladies; their little ears, sweet
creatures, should be tickled with nothing but
love.

Flaw. True, true; but here you may suspend
your politeness a little; for, unless I am mis-
taken, it is to this lady’s good offices you must
be oblig’d in your present pursuit.

O’Flan. Oh! that indeed alters the case. Why
then, madam, this is my business at once: You
must understand I came over lately from Lime-

C

- rick;

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rick; and there, upon my soul, all the world are gone mad about running beyond sea, in search after—I think it is *emigrations* they call them.

Mrs. Fl. I have heard, indeed, that there has been a prodigious desertion.

O' Flan. Prodigious! upon my soul, madam, in a hundred miles riding, I did not meet with a human cratur, except sheep and oxen, to tell me the road; and I should have lost myself again and again, but for the mile-stones, that are so kind to answer your questions without giving you the trouble to ask them: And so, being desirous to follow my neighbours' example, I have, madam, made bold to come over before them.

Flaw. Right; one would not like to be last in the chase.

O' Flan. True. Now, madam, as some emigrations must be better than other some, I should be glad to be recommended to one of the best.

Flaw. Why, that will be no very difficult matter. Let me see! is the collector of the window-lights in Falkland's Island disposed of?

Mrs. Fl. I have not heard that it has been given away; but, however, if it should, the surveyorship of the woods there is vacant, I am sure.

Flaw.

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Flaw. Indeed?

O' Flan. And pray, madam, is that a lucrative place, as to the profit?

Mrs. Fl. Besides the salary, for perquisites you are to have all the loppings and toppings.

Flaw. Ay? upon my word, if that can be got, you will be a happy man, Mr. O' Flanagan.

O' Flan. Without doubt, I shall be in very good luck. But pray, madam, what was the name of the Falklands?

Mrs. Fl. Falkland's Island.

O' Flan. Island! true, true. But, Mr. Flaw, is it a place one can go to by land? becaase why, I am not over-fond of the sea; coming over t'other day from Donechedy, it tumbled and jumbled, and rumbled me to such a degree!

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Flaw—

Flaw. I am afraid it will be difficult.

O' Flan. Why then, if it is equally the same, I should be glad to have an emigration in some other parts.

Mrs. Fl. There was a thing that I got yesterday for a relation of mine, that would have suited this gentleman.

O' Flan. Pray, what might that be?

Mrs. Fl. A tidewaiter's place in the inland part of America.

O' Flan. Inland ! that would just do to a T.

Flaw. Why, you may easily provide in some other way for your cousin.

Mrs. Fl. That's true ; but then, you know, he has put himself to some expence, in fitting himself out for the——

Flaw. Oh ! I dare say Mr. O'Flannagan will be glad to reimburse him.

O' Flan. That I will ; and give him a good spill for his resignation, into the bargain.

Mrs. Fl. Well, Sir, if you will call here to-morrow, we will try to bring matters to bear ; and—— [*O' Flan. going.*]

Flaw. This will be a damn'd fine thing, if you can get it.——Hark'ee ! a word in your ear ! if you discharge well your duty, you will be found in tar and feathers for nothing.

O' Flan. Tar and feathers ? and what the devil will I do wid them, my dear ?

Flaw. When properly mixed, they make a genteel kind of dress, which is sometimes wore in that climate.

O' Flan. Oh ! what, I suppose, a kind of linen, like that at Belfast, that the natives malefactor themselves. .

Flaw. True. And they will shew you the best manner to wear it ; it is very light, keeps out the rain, and sticks extremely close to the skin.

O' Flan.

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O' Flan. Indeed! That is very convenient. Why, as this place seems to suit me so well, before I get the nomination, by way of binding the bargain, had not I better give some earnest beforehand?

Flaw. That will be making things sure.

O' Flan. Here is a fifty-pound note of *Latouche's*, payable at sight in a fortnight.

Mrs. Fl. Vastly well! I shall take proper care on't.

O' Flan. I don't doubt it at all. Feathers that keep out the rain? they must be ducks', to be sure, because they are used to the water: I can't help thinking, Mr. Flaw, when I have got on the dress, how like a goose I shall look. [*Exit.*]

Flaw. Here is the note.

Mrs. Fl. This was lucky beyond expectation! If this goes on, in a little time we shall grow as rich as a keeper of one of the capital clubs.

[*A rap at the door.*]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A gentleman below wishes to see Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. What sort of a person?

Serv. Vast finely dress'd, please your—

Flaw. Oh! I know. Shew him up!—The Israelite I was telling you of.

Mrs.

THE COZENERS.

Mrs. Fl. What, Mr. Moses Manasses?

Flaw. The same.

Enter Moses Manasses.

Walk in, Mr. Manasses! this, Sir, is the lady.

Moses. I vas never see a more finer vomans since I vas born. Madam, I vas take de liberty to beg-a your protection upon a littel affairs.

Mrs. Fl. Sir, any friend of Mr. Flaw's —

Moses. I vas live in de sheety; but I have great ambition to reside at de court-end of de town.

Mrs. Fl. City? I could not have imagined that a gentleman of your dress and address would submit to live in the city.

Moses. Madam, you vas exceeding polite, indeed: I always finds de ladies very partial to me; I vas have de honour to be chose last veek maister of de ceremony to de Mile-End assembly; and Mrs. Alderman herself make always choice of me for de cotillions.

Mrs. Fl. I make not the least doubt of your great success with the ladies:

Moses. Oh, madam!

Flaw. Mr. Manasses, madam, is modest: The city? his success has not been confined to the
city;

city; many a heart-ach has he given, to men of consequence too, let me tell you, on this side the Bar.

Moses. Oh, fy, fy, maister Flaw!

Flaw. What! don't I know? did not you occasion the separation between Mrs. Modish of Marybone and her husband?

Moses. Oh, fy, fy! a flam, indeed, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Pooh! besides, was not you seen during all the last summer, lounging on horseback, through all the lone lanes about Chelsea and Fulham, with young lady Harrow-heart?

Moses. All scandal, upon my honour.

Flaw. Zounds! why, have not I heard the young fellows at Betty's, when you have been passing by with lady Kitty Carmine, in her new vis-a-vis, exclaim, "Look, look! there " is Moses again! dammee, I can't conceive " what the ladies can see in that pencil-felling, " mongrel Manasses! Gad, I fancy he catches " women, as people do quails, with his pipe."

Moses. Dat is all spite, all malice, on my honour!

Mrs. Fl. Pipe? what, does he sing?

Flaw. He? the voice of Squallache, with the taste and manner of Millico.

Moses

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Moses sings].

“ Ven saw you my fader ?

“ Ven saw you my moder ?

Mrs. Fl. I see, I see : Nay, then, I don't wonder.

Flaw. Besides all this, master Moses is an absolute Proteus ; in every elegance, at the top of the tree.

Mrs. Fl. Indeed ?

Flaw. From his present drefs, you would think that all his days were spent in a drawing-room.

Mrs. Fl. Without doubt.

Flaw. But were you to see him on the turf, at Newmarket, in his Tyburn-topp'd wig, tight boots, and round hat, you would swear he had never handled any thing but a curry-comb since he was born. Why, he has rid matches.

Mrs. Fl. Really ?

Flaw. Many.

Moses. No, madam ; but vone, on my vord ; a match with Lord Billy Booty : I vas first, hard in hand on a canter ; my Lord came side by side, give a little bit of chuck vid de elbow, and pop me plump into de ditch of de Devil ; and de people all hollow !

Mrs.

THE COZENERS. 17

Mrs. Fl. Brutes! very unlucky indeed. But pray, Mr. Manasses, how can I serve you? I should be happy to——

Moses. Why, madam, in vone vord—I should be glad to be as well wid de gentlemen as Mr. Flaw say I be wid de ladies; and if, by your assistance, I could get into de Boodles, de Almacks, or vone of de clubs——

Mrs. Fl. Bless me! is it possible that you are not a member?

Moses. I vas often put up; but dey always give me de black ball.

Mrs. Fl. Bless me! what can be the meaning of that?

Moses. I don't know; perhaps my religion was de objection.

Mrs. Fl. I should hardly think them so squeamish as that: The dice are indeed often call'd Doctors; but, by the large evacuation they cause, I should rather think them graduates of physic, than of divinity: No, no; that can't be the case. Let me see!—perhaps you have had dealings with some of the club.

Moses. Yes; I have de little annuity.

Mrs. Fl. Oh ho!—so you have been admitted into the Jerusalem-Chamber?

Moses. Yes, yes, very often.

D

Mrs.

Mrs. Fl. Oh ! then the business is out ; there then is the reason at once.

Moses. How ?

Mrs. Fl. Some of the parties, I suppose, flow in their payments ?

Flaw. And there is nothing those gentlemen dread so much as meeting a dun there.

Mrs. Fl. But I dare say Mr. Manasses, at such a place, would be above dropping a hint.

Moses. Oh, fy ! madam, upon no account.

Mrs. Fl. Very well ! why then, I may venture to assure them as much ?

Moses. Sure, vidout doubt.

Flaw. But, however, madam, tho' some of the old dons should be crusty——

Mrs. Fl. To be sure, means might be used to get over that bar.

Flaw. Easy enough, I should think.

Mrs. Fl. Let us see ! stuffing the negative side of the box, that the black balls cannot descend.

Flaw. Or advancing or retarding the clock.

Mrs. Fl. True ; but then the waiters should be properly spoke to.

Flaw. Oh, I dare say Mr. Manasses does not mind, upon such an occasion.

Moses. Oh, not at all ; I am ready to part vid de money.

Flaw.

Flaw. I dare say. Why, do you consider that a feat there, as Mr. Manasses can manage——

Mrs. Fl. May turn out better for him, perhaps, than a borough.

Moses. Den I may rely upon you, madam?

Mrs. Fl. Give yourself no further trouble about it.

Moses. I have de honor, ma'am—— [going.

Mrs. Fl. But should not Manasses make a deposit? [Apart to Flaw.

Flaw. To be sure.—Mr. Manasses! well, Sir, I wish you joy, Sir: What, we are to have a lottery, I find?

Moses. Dat is all fixed; dere is no danger of dat. I think, madam, dere is no finer sight can be, dan to see de lottery-lanthorns hang up in de streets, vid large red letters, write on all sides; it is so noble!

Mrs. Fl. An elegant ornament, it must be confess'd, to a capital city: Besides, if the passion for play cannot be suppress'd, all that human wisdom can do, is to turn private vices to the use of the public.

Moses. True, true.

Flaw. I suppose you are an adventurer.

Moses. Ay, ay; I have my share, to be sure.

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'em was saying, that she had some thoughts of trying her fortune.

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Moses. By all means ; I wish her much luck !

Flaw. If you should have any tickets about you——

Moses. Perhaps de lady may have de fancy to de particular number.

Flaw. No, no ; we are not superstitious as to the number ; it is the numbers we wish to get at.

Moses. Dere is, madam, a couple de sheets ; Would you give de draft on de banker ? dey are at present mush above par. Let me see !

Flaw. Oh, as to the price, we don't trouble our heads about that ; we will settle that some other time ; make a deduction, you know, for what madam bestows upon the waiters.

Moses. True, true ! Well, madam, your most humble ! you may tell de club dat I shall make de very good member ; for now and den I love to play a little myself.

Mrs. Fl. You do ?

Moses. Yes ; to set de caster at hazard ; and hold de Pharaoh-bank wid de cards.

Flaw. Be cautious, or you may meet with your match.

Moses. Never fear ! ven I vas play, I always do keep myself up for de purpose, like de fighting cock, or de horse.

Mrs. Fl.

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Mrs. Fl. Very right ; for intemperance upon such an occasion——

Moses. It would be de devil, as I eats so little, and drinks nothing at all.

Flaw. No ?

Moses. No, never at cards ; de claret would turn all topsy-turvey : no, no, I must take care not to drown Pharoh again in de Red Sea.

[*Exit Manasses.*

Flaw. and Fl. Ha, ha, ha !

Mrs. Fl. Oh ! have you advertised an honourable feat to be fold ?

Flaw. I never neglect business, you know ; but the perpetuating this damn'd bribery-act has thrown such a rub in our way——

Mrs. Fl. New acts, like new brooms, make a little bustle at first ; but the dirt will return, never fear. What, have no offers been made ?

Flaw. A short note from a broker, who hopp'd out of the Alley, into a good estate in the North. By the first ships I expect some good subjects from the siege of Tanjore.

Mrs. Fl. A sure importation of candidates ; they come in good time, for in such a country as this, what signifies cash without consequence ?

Flaw. True ; which in order to get, what they acquire by conquest they expend in corruption.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Fl. Whilst perhaps a borough, pretty warmly contested, compels the unhappy hero to make a second trip to the East.—[*Kneeling.*] Who can that be?

Flaw. Had not I better withdraw?

Mrs. Fl. First, see who it is.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Simony, madam, below in a chair,

Flaw. Shew her up, by all means.

Mrs. Fl. Simony?

Flaw. The Doctor's lady, about the living, you know.

Mrs. Fl. I remember; but I thought the Doctor himself a——

Flaw. A late mistake has made him a little cautious at present.

Mrs. Fl. A burnt child dreads the—But, pray, what kind of a woman is——

Flaw. An absolute gossip: Your share in the scene will be short: Let her run on; she neither expects, nor desires a reply. Here she is.

Enter Mrs. Simony.

Mrs. Sim. Madam, I am your obedient, and very devoted! Mr. Flaw, I am entirely yours! ten thousand

thousand pardons for waiting upon you in this dishabille ! but I stay'd so late last night at lady Lurch'em's assembly, that I have had but just time to huddle on my things ; and now I have not five minutes to spare, as I promis'd precisely at twelve to call on lady Frolic, to take a turn in Kensington-Gardens, to see both the exhibitions, the stain'd glass, dwarf, giant, and Cox's Museum. Mr. Flaw, I presume, has mentioned our little affair. The Doctor would have waited on you himself ; but men *bum*, and *ba*, and are so roundabout, aukward, and shy ! now I am always for coming plump to the point : Besides, women best understand one another, you know. But, as I was saying, the patron of the business in question is, as we understand, a near friend and relation of yours.

Mrs. Fl. Madam, I shall be happy to——

Mrs. Sim. Your patience, madam ! for I have not a moment to spare. Now, as, it cannot be supposed that some people should do favours for other people, with which people those people are not acquainted, I am ready to advance—— for the Doctor knows nothing about it.

Mrs. Fl. How, madam ? I understood——

Mrs. Sim. The Doctor ? not he, I assure you, madam ; entirely ignorant, in every respect ; Now, if such a favour can be obtain'd, I am
ready

ready to deposit, as Mr. Flaw has doubtless informed you——

Mrs. Fl. Why, I can't say, madam, but it is very handsome.

Mrs. Sim. Nay, madam, the party will lose no credit by doing what is desired: The Doctor's powers are pretty well known about town; not a more populous preacher within the sound of Bow-bell; I don't mean for the mobility only; *those* every canting fellow can catch; the best people of fashion ar'n't ashamed to follow my Doctor: Not one, madam, of the humdrum, drawling, long-winded tribe; he never crams congregations, gives them more than they can carry away; not above ten or twelve minutes at most.

Mrs. Fl. Indeed?

Mrs. Sim. Even the dowager-duchess of Drowsy was never known to nod at my Doctor; and then he doesn't pore, with his eyes close to the book, like a clerk that reads the first lesson; not he! but all extemporary, madam; with a cambrick handkerchief in one hand, and a diamond ring on the other: And then he waves this way, and that way; and he curtsies, and he bows, and he bounces, that all the people are ready to—— But then his wig, madam! I am sure you must admire his dear wig; not
with

with the bushy, brown buckles, dangling and dropping, like a Newfoundland spaniel; but short, rounded off at the ear, to shew his plump cherry cheeks; white as a curd, feather-topped, and the curls as close as a cauliflower.

Mrs. Fl. Why really, madam——

Mrs. Sim. Then, my Doctor is none of your scismatics, madam; believes in the whole thirty-nine; and so he would, if there were nine times as many.

Mrs. Fl. Very obedient.

Mrs. Sim. Obedient! As humble and meek as a curate; does duly his duties; never scruples to bury, though it be but a tradesman—unless, indeed, he happens to be better engaged.

Mrs. Fl. Why, with all these good qualities, I should think our success must be certain.

Mrs. Sim. With your assistance, madam, I have not the least doubt in the world: So, madam, begging your pardon for having intruded so long, I leave Mr. Flaw and you to confer on the subject.—Not a step, I beseech you.—Lord bless me! I had like to have forgot: My memory, as the Doctor says, is so very tenacious, that it is not one time in twenty I can remember the text. Besides all I have said, my Doctor, madam, possesses a pretty little poetical

E

vein:

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vein: I have brought you here a little hymn in my pocket.

Mrs. Fl. Madam, you are very——

Mrs. Sim. Of which the Doctor desires your opinion.

Mrs. Fl. Hymn? then the Doctor sings, I presume.

Mrs. Sim. Not a better pipe at the playhouse; he has been long notorious for that: Then he is as chearful, and has such a choice collection of songs! why, he is constantly asked at the great city-feasts; and does, I verily believe, more in-door christnings than any three of the cloth. But this composition, madam, is of a different kind: It is but short; but if the party, your worthy friend and relation, should happen to like the manner of writing, he has a much longer one for his immediate perusal.—Madam, I am your obsequious, and very devoted—— Not a step, my good Mr. Flaw! my chairmen are, you know, in waiting. [Exit.

Mrs. Fl. A hymn? what the deuce can the woman mean by a hymn? Let me see!—"Pro-
mise to pay to the bearer one hundred pounds,
"for the governor and company"—Ay, marry,
this is coming *plump to the business*: No man
can deny, Mr. Flaw, but these lines are sterling.

If

THE COZENERS. 27

If the Doctor's prose is as good as his poetry, I don't wonder he has so many admirers. But when shall I see you?

Flaw. Immediately after I have paid my provincials a visit.

Mrs. Fl. Oh, then I may have time to execute a little scheme of my own.

Flaw. Of what kind?

Mrs. Fl. One that will turn out both pleasant and profitable: You know the prim mercer, not far from St. Paul's?

Flaw. What, young Prig, that presents you an eternal attitude to all hacks of the city, and stands in stiff buckle before his own shop, like a sign?

Mrs. Fl. Even he.

Flaw. The fellow is a fop, to be sure; but you will not find it an easy matter to gull him; the coxcomb is suspicious and guarded.

Mrs. Fl. Against a common contrivance, perhaps; otherwise he would be no object for one of my original genius. Besides, there is a necessity for some new silks to grace my niece's nuptials, you know.

Flaw. True, true: Well, success attend you!

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. Be in no pain about me. Who's there?

E 2

Enter

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Enter a Servant.

Order the carriage to the door; and do you and the coachman put on your best liveries.

Serv. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Fl. And, do you hear, John? if they should be inquisitive, where I stop, as to my place of abode, give 'em no information: I should be sorry to have it known, that one of my rank and fortune was pent up in a paltry lodging.

Serv. Your ladyship need be under no fears.

Mrs. Fl. If, at coming from the mercer's, where I shall go first, the master of the shop should get into the coach, drive to doctor Hellebore's, who you know is famous for curing of mad folks; the third door to the left in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Serv. I shall give the coachman directions.

Mrs. Fl. And, John! if any body should call in my absence, let them know that I am gone, with the countess of Carnaby, to see the preparations for the great trial in Westminster-Hall.

Serv. Mighty well, madam. *[Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. That fellow has uncommon talents, for one of his station: What a matchless porter would he make to a great minister! for he lies like an attorney, and his muscles are as steady as those of his master. *[Exit.*

A C T

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Bagnio. Enter Flaw followed by Tom.

Flaw.

HA V E not you a family here, that came lately out of the country?

Tom. I suppose you mean, Sir, Mr. Aircastle.

Flaw. I do; is the gentleman within?

Tom. In the back dining-room, up one pair of stairs.

Flaw. Will you let him know there is a person wishes to see him? If he wants to know my name——

Tom. I can tell him.

Flaw. Ay? why, have we been ever acquainted?

Tom. What! have you forgot Tom, master Flaw, at the Crown and Rolls in Chancery-Lane?

Flaw. I recollect. But I thought, by this time, you had set up for yourself: You seemed in a very good way.

Tom. Pretty well, master, for that part of the town: But, Lord, Sir, the penurious pence of the lawyers won't do for us, who are the superior knights of the napkin; after poring an hour over

a fix

30 THE COZENERS.

a six and eight-penny bill, "Here, Tom, give us
"change! and mind, there is a groat for yourself:"
How was it possible to support a girl and a gelding
upon such a two-penny tax? it could not be.

Flaw. That is true, indeed.

Tom. No, no. So, dipping pretty deeply in
debt, I got a friendly commission of bankruptcy
to discharge my old scores, and removed to this
end of the town.

Flaw. Where you thrive, without doubt.

Tom. To give you a sample—It was but last
night, Sir Ralph Riot moved, that every man in
the club should give the waiter two guineas a-piece,
just by way of *surprising* the rascal.

Flaw. And it was carried?

Tom. Oh, *nem. con.*—the members never flinch
at a frolic.

Flaw. I wish you joy of your station!—But
pray, by what accident came the family above to
your house? There must have been some mistake
in the matter; for they are people of very good
reputation.

Tom. I can't guess. Only that the town is thin,
and business begins to grow dead, we should hardly
have given them admittance; they are a strange
unaccountable tribe: Pray who the deuce are they?

Flaw. A respectable family, from the county of
Wilts, with a very good landed estate, I assure you.

Tom.

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Tom. On which, I suppose, the 'squire condescends to kill his own meat; and madam, his lady, to dress it: Then it is one eternal wrangle between them, conducted in a language pretty near as coarse as their carter's.

Flaw. They have been bred in a state of Nature, Tom.

Tom. The husband, for once or twice, is entertaining enough: He sets out to inform you in a most material point, as he thinks, which he forsakes in an instant to follow some other circumstance, not material at all; this he soon quits for another, and soon for another, if you will give him attention. He puts me in mind of a pack of hounds in a hare-warren; by eternally shifting the game, the pursuit never ends.

Flaw. You have him, Tom; Mr. Aircastle is, I own, very prolix and digressive.

Tom. Unless I am mistaken, the son has an old acquaintance here in the house.

Flaw. Ay?

Tom. Miss Betsy Blossom, one of our ladies, who comes, I fancy, from their part of the world: She wishes to avoid the father and mother, but hints that she has good reason to remember the son.

Flaw. Perhaps so.

Tom. Madam the mother too, who is still a jolly brisk dame, seems determined to make the most of her time.

Flaw.

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Flaw. How so?

Tom. She has dispatched, this morning, a billet to Col. Gorget, an old master of mine.

Flaw. If they are at present alone, you will be so kind to announce me.

Tom. Those stairs lead to their door; there is no occasion for a master of the ceremonies.

[*Exit Flaw.*

Miss! Miss Betsey!

Enter Betsey.

Well; have you encountered your Corydon?

Betsey. No; I have carefully kept myself out of his way.

Tom. Then now throw yourself into it, as soon as you can; for, unless you prevent it, I can foresee a design to dispose of him in a very different manner.

Betsey. In the interim, I could wish to have him all to myself; no danger of an interruption from the father and mother.

Tom. Watch then when they are out of the way. But remember you run no risque in over-acting your part; treat him with a large dish of daggers, death, and despair.

Betsey. Never fear; I know how to proportion my dose.

Tom. Are you prepared with the two verses I gave you?

Betsey.

THE COZENERS. 31

Betsy. Yes, yes; and I warrant will thunder them with good effect in his ears.

Tom. Success attend you, my girl! [*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to another room.

Mr. and Mrs. Aircraftle discovered.

Air. Well, well, mark the end on't! this will turn out like all the rest of your projects.

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Mr. Aircraftle, will you never give over your grumblings? I thought I had convinced you, before you left home, that London was the only spot for people to thrive in.

Air. Convinced me? Did not I tell you what parson Prunello said—I remember Mrs. Lightfoot was by—she had been brought to-bed, that day was a month, of a very fine boy—a bad birth; for Doctor Seeton, who served his time with Luke Lancet of Guise's—there was a talk about him and Nancy the daughter—she afterwards married Will Whitlow, another apprentice, who had great expectations from an old uncle in the Grenades; but he left all to a distant relation, Kit Cable, a midshipman aboard the Torbay—she was lost, coming home, in the Channel—the captain was taken up by a coaster from Rye, loaded with cheese——

Mrs. Air. Mercy upon me, Mr. Aircraftle, at
F what

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what a rate you run on! What has all this to do with our coming to London?

Air. Why, I was going to tell you; but you will never have patience!

Mrs. Air. More than ever woman possessed. Would you, I say, be contented to spring, grow, and decay, in the same country spot, like a cabbage?

Air. Yes; provided I left behind me some promising sprouts.

Mrs. Air. What! have you no ambition? no soul? could you be easy to stand stock-still, whilst your neighbours are advancing all round you? Cottagers are become farmers; farmers are made justices; and folks that travelled barefoot to London, roll down again in their coaches and chariots; but still we stick!

Air. What then? For, as counsellor Crab said at the assizes—he came down to plead for Ned Nick'em, who won at Bath a large sum of Lord Luckless—the principal witness was Christopher Cogg'em—who was condemned to the pillory; but saved by Phil Fang the attorney—who——

Mrs. Air. What matters what any body said? but you are always flying from the——

Air. Why, what a pox would the woman be at?—Ha'n't I lopp'd off a handsome limb of
my

my land to put your hopeful project in practice?

Mrs. Air. Well; and must not every body who ventures in the lottery of life first pay for his ticket?

Air. I believe Toby will hardly thank me for going into the wheel.

Mrs. Air. No; I suppose he would rather stay at home, and marry Bet Blossom: A pretty alliance he had like to have given us!

Air. But you know I drove the girl out of the parish.

Mrs. Air. Are there none of the same stamp left behind?

Air. Well, well, here we are, and what's to be done?

Mrs. Air. Our first business is to get Toby disposed of; upon your head, we will consult Mr. Flaw; as to my affairs, leave me to myself.

Air. And as for Toby, the best method, you think, will be——

Mrs. Air. To advertise the boy, to be sure.

Air. Do you think so? Advertise Toby? I was once told by Tom Type, a printer of one of the papers—he was tried for a libel before Sir Philip Flogg'em, at the Old-Bailey—two of the jury died that sessions of the distemper—doctor Drybones recommended vinegar by way

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of prevention—the Doctor wore the strangest black wigs!—they were made by Ben Block'em, of Bow-Street—I dined with him once, when he was churchwarden, upon two bastard children—we had a haunch of venison—the venison was over-roasted, and stunk—but doctor Dewlap twisted down such gobs of fat——

Mrs. Air. But what is all this to the purpose?

Air. I was going to tell you, if you would but listen a bit!

Mrs. Air. What did Type say?

Air. That he never knew any good come of that kind of——

Mrs. Air. Then Type was a fool! don't we see by the news, that there is no other way of making matches in London?

Air. Well, well—you know best, to be sure.

Mrs. Air. Here the advertisement is; I have penned it myself.

Air. You penned it? Damn me, if she can spell a single syllable of the language!

Mrs. Air. Call the boy in; and observe, Mr. Aircastle, if he corresponds with the marks.

Air. Toby!

[*Calling.*

Enter Toby.

Lord, Mrs. Aircastle, how you have altered the boy! why, his face is as long as a fiddle-stick!

stick! and then he has a bundle at his back, as big as a child!

Mrs. Air. Pray, Mr. Aircastle, mind your own business, I beg! would you have him dressed like yourself, in a suit of cloaths made thirty years ago, when you were sheriff for the county?—Toby, stand forth! “Wanted, for a young gentleman of an ancient family, and agreeable person”—Toby, hold up your head!

Toby. I does, mother, I does.

Air. It is impossible, my dear, the boy should ever walk in that manner; why, he will run against every body he meets. Toby, do you think you can step without stumbling?

Toby. Not in the streets; but cros a room pretty well, I believe.

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, have you no idea of grace? Shoulders back, Toby; and chest a little more out!

Air. Now, child, look at his elbows! you have pinioned him down like a pickpocket.

Mrs. Air. Grace, Mr. Aircastle, grace.

Air. Grace? he has neither grace, nor grease; his breast-bone sticks out like a turkey’s.

Mrs. Air. Nothing but grace! I wish you would read some late Posthumous Letters; you would then know the true value of grace: Do you know that the only way for a young man

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to thrive in the world, is to get a large dish of hypocrisy, well garnished with grace, an agreeable person, and a clear patrimonial estate?—
 “ A wife with a very large portion : If the fortune answers, proper allowance will be made
 “ for person and mind. The party, and his
 “ rent-roll, may be seen at the Lamb in Long-
 “ Acre, every hour of the day.”

Air. Why, this will bring the whole town to the house.

Mrs. Air. That is just what I intend ; the more bidders, the better.

Enter Tom and Flaw.

Tom. Mr. Flaw. *[Exit.*

Flaw. Good folks, you are welcome to London!

Air. Ay, here we are, Mr. Flaw ; here's Toby too.

Toby. Yes, here I am, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Bless me ! what a change ! I should scarce have known him.

Toby. Yes, I suppose I am pretty much altered, being garnished with grace.

Air. Ay ; a grace, I believe, that will tempt nobody to taste of the dish.

Mrs. Air. Never mind him, Mr. Flaw ; he is a desponding creature, you know. But, as a proof that we have not been idle, here is the first fruits of my labour.

Flaw.

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Flaw. What is it?

Mrs. Air. An advertisement to procure a partner for Toby.

Flaw. A partner?

Mrs. Air. Ay, a wife, with a suitable fortune.

Flaw. I hope it is not sent to the papers.

Toby. What, the notice where I am to be seen? here it is in my hand.

Mrs. Air. Give it me; and go you out, and wait 'till you are wanted: And don't listen! d'ye hear? And, Toby, be mindful of grace! and, d'ye hear? don't laugh! you may grin, indeed, to shew your teeth, and your manners.

Toby. Will that do?

Mrs. Air. Pretty well, for the first time.

[*Exit Toby.*

Flaw. Bless me, madam! how could such a thought——

Mrs. Air. Don't we every day see such things in the news?

Flaw. Ay, from an old maid in despair, a broken millener, or a tottering tobacconist.

Air. I told her so, Mr. Flaw: Zounds, says I, you treat the boy as if he was a white bear, or an ostrich—though it is quite a mistake, Mr. Flaw, that those creatures eat iron: I saw one once at the Checquer at Salisbury—the keeper's name was Evan Thomas, a Welshman—he had
but

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but one hand—he lost the other, endeavouring to steal a piece of cheese out of a rat-trap—the trap went down, and——

Mrs. Air. Did ever mortal see such a man?

Air. And, zounds, why must not I speak? she likes to listen to no sounds but her own; but I will be heard, and——

Mrs. Air. And so you shall, when you talk to the purpose.

Air. Purpose, madam? Damn it, I would have you to know——

Flaw. Oh, fy, fy, good people! curb your cholers a little: Consider you are not now in the country.

Air. Well, well, I am calm.

Flaw. Then, to return to our business: Besides, my good madam, I had provided a match that would have completed all our matters at once.

Mrs. Air. How?

Flaw. A lady, an acquaintance of mine, lately arrived with her niece from the Indies——

Mrs. Air. And rich?

Flaw. Enough to purchase the sceptre of Poland.

Air. How!

Flaw. Ay, even before his very good neighbours had brought that monarchy down to a manor.

Air,

Air. And pray, as to the party?

Flaw. Fleece'em is the name of the aunt; not much indebted to fortune; but whoever is happy enough to marry the niece, won't scruple, I dare say, to procure her a proper provision.

Mrs. Air. The most reasonable thing in the world.

Flaw. I ventured to promise as much.

Mrs. Air. Then you have hinted the business?

Flaw. As good as concluded. As marriage-bonds are illegal, it will be right to make a deposit before the solemnization.

Mrs. Air. To be sure. Now, Mr. Aircraftle, I hope I was right; for seeing a little cash might promote our designs, I got him to sell Sycamore-farm, and we have brought the money to town.

Flaw. How much might the——

Mrs. Air. Five thousand.

Flaw. But, with a few diamonds, for which I will get you credit——

Mrs. Air. By all means.—When should we wait on the young lady?

Flaw. This very morning; we cannot be too quick; some of the young blades about town begin to have an inkling, I fear; I observe them throw their eyes up to the windows.

Mrs. Air. Without doubt. Mr. Aircraftle,

G

you

you will go out to the shops, and provide Toby with a new Beckford-hat and a couteau du chasse?

Flaw. And purchase at the same time some presents for the young lady.

Mrs. Air. The first time?

Flaw. Always the rule in the East; you never approach a superior without a suitable present.

Mrs. Air. No?

Air. No? why, fool, that is the way the Nabobs have got all their wealth—I knew one of them once; and, if he had not been so rich, really a good sort of a—he was inoculated for the small-pox, by one of the Suttons, at the great house by Hyde-Park—the builder of it got into the Bench, and was afterwards cleared by an act of insolvency—though Tom Jenkins, one of his creditors——

Mrs. Air. You see!—Lord bless me now, Mr. Aircastle, how can you, when we have not a moment to lose—Go, go out with the boy, I beseech you!

Air. Well, well, well! [Going.

Flaw. I'll run before, and prepare Mrs. Fleece'em.

Mrs. Air. By all manner of means.

Air. Pray, is not the toy-shop at the end of the street, kept by the son of—I remember I met the father once at Newmarket—he was in

a one-

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a one-horse chaise, made by Varnish here in Long-Acre—who built a state-coach for the Empress of Russia—he was recommended by Lord—I can't think of his name—who was chosen one of the sixteen for the kingdom of—

Mrs. Air. Take him with you, dear Mr. Flaw!

Flaw. Come, Sir, I will shew you the shop.

[*Exeunt Aircastle and Flaw.*]

Mrs. Air. So! having provided for Toby, I am at leisure to attend to my own private concerns. Who's there?

Enter Maid-Servant.

Bid the Waiter come up!

[*Exit Maid.*]

If colonel Gorget answers my letter in the way I expect, it will prove a pretty good beginning: The colonel, I make no doubt, knows the ways of the world, and will soon take the hint: He was vastly struck with me during the races; and I don't see why I have not as good a right to profit by my person, as I am told some ladies do, who live in this——

Enter Waiter.

Well, Sir, what return to my letter?

Waiter. The colonel, madam, will obey your commands.

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Mrs. Air. Very well! when he comes, shew him into the next room. [Exeunt.

Another Room in the Bagnio.

Enter Colonel Gorget, reading a letter.

Gorget. Bravo, bravo, my sweet country acquaintance! this is a rendezvous, with a witness. Let me see! *Um, um, um!* “Unexpectedly brought by business to town—no time to make a proper provision—accommodate me with Five Hundred Guineas”—accommodate! an apt phrase, and a pretty sum too; but how the deuce could the woman suppose that I was able to advance such a sum? *Um, um!*—“Not prove ungrateful—Elizabeth”—Oh, ho! now I begin to conceive.—Stay! who have we here? Zooks! the husband himself.

Enter Aircastle.

Air. What, colonel Gorget!

Gorget. Mr. Aircastle, I am happy to see you! But what important business can have brought you to London?

Air. Some family affairs, and to lay out a pretty large sum, which I lately got for a parcel of land.—But is this visit intended to me?

Gorget. No; I was quite a stranger to your being

being in town. A lady in the house, that I lately knew in the country——

Air. What, from our part of the world?

Gorget. No, no; but a devilish fine woman: Last summer some little gallantries past between us below.

Air. Ay, ay; you officers play the very deuce when you come down into the country. I remember ensign Sash, about ten years ago—his father came from Barbadoes—I met him at Treacle's, the great sugar-baker's, who had a house in St. Mary-Axe—he took the lease from alderman Gingham, who served sberiff with deputy—there was tight work on the hustings—

Gorget. Oh, the devil! he runs on at the old rate.—But we forget the lady.

Air. Oh, ay; “Gallantry with her below;” which I suppose you have finished above.

Gorget. No, faith, not entirely, my friend; but I think we are in a fair way.

Air. Ay?

Gorget. The garrison has offered to surrender.

Air. Then what prevented you from taking possession?

Gorget. The governor, as usual, insists on a bribe, which it was not immediately in my power to pay——

Air. Damn those governors!—why, there was
the

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the governor of Bergen-op-zoom, in the last war——

Gorget. But hear me!—I was just stepping home to provide the credentials; but, however, this lucky meeting will, I flatter myself, put an end to my journey.

Air. As how?

Gorget. If you will supply me with the sum till evening, I shall close the bargain without quitting the house.

Air. How much?

Gorget. Five hundred guineas.

Air. Five hundred guineas? what a cormorant the woman must be!

Gorget. Not at all, when her husband is rich, and she is above accepting a trifle.

Air. Now, I should have thought that would have made her more reasonable.

Gorget. Quite the reverse; why, did you ever know a wealthy courtier accept of a moderate pension?

Air. That, indeed—But are you really serious?

Gorget. So serious, that if you will lend me the money——

Air. Nay, but, colonel, that is——

Gorget. Nay, but if you hesitate——

Air. No, it is not that; the money is quite at
your

your service; but you will repent, and then reproach me—What! five hundred? there can be no woman worth it.

Gorget. You would alter your tone, if you saw her.

Air. Should I? Prithee tell me her name; perhaps I may know her.

Gorget. I durst not; you know my honour is concerned.

Air. Honour with such a woman as that?

Gorget. She is very well known.

Air. And ought to be better.

Gorget. But I waste time, and may lose the critical minute: Will you supply me, or must I—

Air. With the greatest pleasure in life: Here is in this bag the very sum, which I have just received for a draft in the city.

Gorget. Ten thousand thanks, my dear Mr.—

Air. I can't say tho', but I am sorry—

Gorget. Oh, it is not impossible but I may come off at an easier rate: With such a capital in hand, one may haggle, you know.

Air. True, true; I'd endeavour to get her for nothing: Chouse her, chouse her! do, colonel. If indeed she had asked for a ring with a poesy, or any such trifle as that—but such a monstrous demand! I would give something to see her.

Gorget.

Gorget. Why, it is my opinion you know who she is.

Air. Really?

Gorget. Now if it should turn out that you had been happy with the lady yourself, would not that greatly surprise you?

Air. Me? ha, ha, ha! the deuce a bit: Tho', when I came first to the Temple, there was a lawyer's wife that lived in Quality-Court, that I was exceedingly fond of—her husband came home one night, and I crept under the bed, where I should have remained concealed, but for a little dog of Charles's breed; he went *bow, wow, wow*—

Gorget. Oh, the devil!—But consider, time presses; I must away to the lady.

Air. True, true; and I to the shops with my boy. And I happy with the—ha, ha, ha—However, if that be the case, colonel, it is a stronger reason for closing your purse-strings; for the devil take me if I ever knew a woman who was deserving a tythe of that sum in my life!—Yes; I lie! I did; a Greek girl, they called Circassian—I saw her at Tunbridge—where, by the bye, they have the oddest pantile walk—with the musick on a shelf—and as the company walk to and fro, the fiddlers go *tal, lal, la*—

Gorget. Nay, but—[*pushing him out*]. This is lucky beyond expectation; what a civilized husband, to supply me with the very money I wanted!

Enter

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Enter Tom.

Is the lady at leisure?

Tom. She knows her husband is gone out, and will be with you this instant.

Gorget. Very well! take care, and watch his return.

Tom. Here she is.

[*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Aircastle.

Mrs. Air. What, you are come, my dear colonel! I have waited for you with the utmost impatience.

Gorget. And I, madam, have flown to obey your commands.

Mrs. Air. No more of that, colonel, I beg: I blush to consider——

Gorget. Blush? and why so, madam?

Mrs. Air. At what you must think of my letter: But the high sense I entertain of your friendship, induced me, in such an exigence, to make the trial.

Gorget. And the wisest step you could take.

Mrs. Air. Pardon me, Sir! I am not to learn how dangerous it is to have an obligation to you.

Gorget. And why so? Can there be any thing more natural than to desire the assistance of the

H

person

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person who loves us? Of my attachment I hope you have no reason to doubt.

Mrs. Air. That, Sir, is the very source of my sorrow, and has determined me to support every evil; nay, to apply even to Mr. Aircastle himself, rather than——

Gorget. How, madam! then it is plain I have lost your esteem. Fool that I was, to be lulled by the bewitching lines of your letter! I thought that I had detected Love, that sly lurcher, lurking under the mask of confidential—But now I unfortunately find how far I am from your favour.

Mrs. Air. Cruel, unjust colonel Gorget!

Gorget. Ha! am I unjust? you revive me! you restore me to—But banish every thought of an obligation to any but me; I should be jealous of——

Mrs. Air. But really, colonel, the sum is—

Gorget. Of no importance at all; a mere trifle; just nothing: I shall not feel it, believe me.

Mrs. Air. How can I be too grateful for such a generous proof of your friendship? Sure you were born to——

Enter Toby.

What the deuce has brought that booby back!

[*Aside.*

Toby.

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Toby. Father desires you would call in your way, and take him up at the sword-cutler's.

Gorget. How ! the young cub ? This is lucky beyond expectation !—Here, madam, are the five hundred guineas, which you will be kind enough to pay, with my thanks, to Mr. Aircastle, your husband.

Mrs. Air. Finely taken and turned ; what infinite wit and contrivance ! [*aside.*]—But would it not be right, colonel, just to sign a receipt ?

Gorget. Unnecessary, madam ; but just as you please.

Mrs. Air. There is pen and ink in the room over head.

Gorget. Give me leave to conduct you.

[*Exeunt Gorget and Mrs. Air.*]

Toby. I don't understand what father and mother's about. Here am I dizen'd, and skewer'd, and graced, just like a young colt that is a-breaking : Nay, they were going to advertise me too, as if I was really a horse ; but lawyer Flaw has made them alter their minds, and I am to be disposed of by private contract, I think. I can't say that I am over-fond of their ways. Oh, poor Betsy Blossom ! let them match me to whoever they will, I shall never love any like thee : I believe I should have put an end to their project, if I could but have found—Hey ! who

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is this? Mercy on me! sure it must be her ghost! and yet that can't be; because ghosts, they say, never comes but at night. Betsy?

Enter Betsy Blossom.

Betsy. Master Toby?

Toby. But is it possible? can it be you?

Betsy. As you see.

Toby. Well, and how? Lord, I have ten thousand questions to ask you. Where hast been? how dost do? how comest here? Why, you are vast fine, Betsy, all of a sudden; you be not married?

Betsy. Married? no, no; you have put that out of my power, you know.

Toby. Me? how so, Mrs. Betty?

Betsy. Is that a question now to be asked? have you so soon forgot what has happened between us?

Toby. No, no; I remember some part pretty well, I believe: But you cannot come for to go for to say, that we ever went to church together, in that there way you mean.

Betsy. That ceremony, Mr. Toby, you know well, was all that was wanting——

Toby. Besides, it could not be, Mrs. Betsy; because why, as father says, since the parliament-house interfered, it is against the law to marry for love.

Betsy,

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Betsy. How! what, are all your vows, oaths, promises, forgot? does not this sixpence, broken between us, when we last met in the grove, stare you full in the face?

Toby. Yes; I have t'other half in my pocket.

Betsy. Does not your conscience, Mr. Toby, upbraid you? But men are all traitors alike! their whole study is to delude poor innocent maids. Oh! why did I trust that fair face and flattering tongue, and not suspect the wily serpent that was lurking beneath?

Toby. Nay, Betsy——

Betsy. But my prayers are granted, however; my only wish was to see you once more——

Toby. My sweet, dear, little Betsy——

Betsy. Once more to survey that sweet form; the business of life is now over! Eyes, take your last look! open, thou cold earth, to receive me——

Toby. Lord have mercy! if you don't frighten me out of my wits.

Betsy. To thy dreary mansion I come! there my sorrows will cease, and my shame, and name, be forgot by the unpitying—Oh! [*Faints.*

Toby. Stop, stop, dearest Betsy, and take me along with you! Murder, fire, water! Waiter! what, will nobody come to assist her?

Enter

Enter Tom.

Tom. Bless me, Sir! what can be the matter?

Toby. Why, here is a poor young creature at her last gasp: Clap her hand, and bend her forward a bit!

Tom. Miss Betsy? Mercy on us! how came this about? It is only a fit; she revives, her eyes begin to open a little.

Betsy. Where am I?

Toby. In the fore-room, up one pair of stairs.

Tom. Bless me, Sir, what can be the occasion of this?

Toby. Why, it is a young woman that is breaking her heart.

Tom. Her heart? and for what?

Toby. Why, for love of me, to be sure.

Tom. And can you be such a barbarian? why, you must have the heart of a tiger, to stand unshocked at such a horrible scene.

Toby. Nay, I have been shocked enough, if that is all.

Tom. Then why don't you remove her distress?

Toby. Why, she wants me to marry her.

Tom. And is that all she asks; and can you hesitate for such a trifle as that?

Toby. Why, how can I, when father and
mother

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mother have promised me to an Indian woman, as rich as a Jew, from beyond sea?

Betsy. How! and have I a rival? perjured monster! But think not my death shall finally close our account; my shade, like Margaret's grimly ghost, shall pursue thee, haunt thee in dreams at midnight; shake thy curtains round thy guilty head, and holloa in thine ear!

*Betbink thee, Toby, of thy fault,
Thy pledge and broken oath;
And give me back my maiden vow,
And give me back my troth.*

Toby. Take it with you, Mrs. Betty, whenever you please.

Betsy [*Sings*].

*For this I'll haunt thy midnight dreams,
And hover round thy bed;
Thy ears I'll fill with horrid screams,
Nor leave thee till thou'rt dead.*

Toby. Why, you won't go to be so cruel, I hope! what, is there no amends to be made?

Tom. So, Sir, you see, dead or alive, she is determined to plague you.

Toby. Yes, yes; I see it well enough. Lord, who could have thought it? she is mightily changed since her coming to London.

Tom.

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Tom. This town is apt to open the mind.

Toby. Is it? I hope it will shut again, though, when she gets into the country. But pray, Mr. What-d'ye-call-em, by what chance did Betsy come here?

Tom. My mistress took her in, out of compassion: It is wonderful how charitable a lady she is! why, we have five or six more young women here in the same situation.

Toby. Indeed? she must be the most goodest woman on earth: Well, if she don't go to Heaven, what chance has such a poor creature as I?

Tom. None at all, unless you repair the wrongs she has suffered.

Toby. But if I was minded to comply with her wish, I don't see how I can bring it about?

Tom. You are one-and-twenty, no doubt?

Toby. These three years and above.

Tom. And Miss?

Toby. Within a twelvemonth of me.

Tom. Oh, then I will manage matters, I warrant. Where are you going?

Toby. To call on father, at a shop near the old black man a-horseback; the wind has blown his hat from his head.

Tom. Very well! Give them the slip as soon as you can; run back here; you will find us—

Betsy.

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Betsy. What, is he a-going? oh!

Toby. Nay, *Betsy*, be quiet! ben't I ready to do all that you want? If you faint any more, I wish I may die if I'll have you.

Betsy. Won't you?

Toby. No.

Tom. Courage, Miss! keep up your——

Toby. Right, Mr. —— or, if she must faint, can't she wait a little, till I get out of the house?

[*Exit.*

Tom. He is off: Finely managed! Do not stir from hence: I will run to the Commons, and be back again in a— One kifs, as a reward for the part I have——

Enter Toby.

Toby. I forgot to ask, Sir, where I should——

Tom. Run! here, Sir! she is fainting again!

Toby. Is she? then call somebody else, for I will make the best of my way—— [Exit.

Tom and Betsy. Ha, ha, ha! [Exeunt.

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ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'om and Prig.

Mrs. Fleece'em.

IT is lucky the Doctor is at home [*aside*]. John, you may take the filks of Mr. Prig, and put them into the coach.—How could I be so giddy to forget my purse, and leave it on the table? All my servants are honest, I hope.

Prig. No doubt; it would be the greatestest of crimes, to injure a lady of your affability and aimiability.

Mrs. Fl. Quite polite, I protest, Mr. Prig! I am sorry, however, Sir, to have given you all this trouble.

Prig. I consider it, madam, as one of the most greatestest pieces of happiness that could have befallen Paul Prig. Your la'ship is a perfect pattern of humility: To suffer a simple tradesman like me to occupy part of your la'ship's coach, is such an honour that——

Mrs. Fl. Honour? by no means, Mr. Prig: I don't know a station more useful, or indeed more reputable, than that of a citizen like you,
who

who condescends to employ his genius in adorning his fellow-creatures. The ladies, indeed, are most obliged to your labours.

Prig. Were all ladies like you, madam, my condition would be celestial indeed; for, as Master Shakspeare says,

“ The labour we delight in physicks pain.”

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Prig, I protest you surprize me! who could have expected so much gallantry from the Ward of Farringdon-Within?

Prig. Your charms, madam, would animate even a native of Hockley in the Hole!

Mrs. Fl. Fy, Mr.—

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My master begs you would step into his study. [Exit.

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Prig, you will excuse me a moment: It is lucky my lawyer is at home; I shall take the money, and not give you the trouble to go so far as my house. I shall soon call again at your shop. [Exit.

Prig. The greatest pleasure, madam, that I could ever have.—Ha, ha! left her purse on the table? a likely story, indeed! No, no; I understand her ogles and leers; her eyes spoke more truth than her tongue. I don't recollect to have seen her before; but she has seen me, that is clear,

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from the strength of her passion. "Soon call at
" your shop ?" and how soft the tone of her
voice ! Yes, yes ; I believe you will. Well, well,
you sha'n't be disappointed, my dear ; his worst
enemies can't accuse Paul Prig of being cruel.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. You had better step into this room ;
there is a fire.

Prig. By all means. " A station more useful,
" or more reputable, than that of a"—poor
creter ! she must be very far gone indeed. [*Exeunt.*

Another Room.

Doctor Hellebore and Mrs. Fleece'em discovered.

Helle. To whose recommendation, madam, do
I owe the honour——

Mrs. Fl. The world's, doctor ; your great
reputation.

Helle. Oh, madam !

Mrs. Fl. But, as I was observing to you, Sir,
if it was not for these unaccountable whims in
my uncle, no man in England has a finer under-
standing, or a clearer conception : Nothing irre-
gular in his conduct ; discharges all the social
duties with the utmost exactness ; reasons with the
most perfect precision upon every subject.

Helle. And the state of his bodily health ?

Mrs. Fl. He does not complain.

Helle.

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Helle. And these distractions are frequent ?

Mrs. Fl. I think more so, of late.

Helle. Ay, the great tension of the Pia-mater must enfeeble the system; and the paroxisms, of course, oftener repeated, and of longer continuance. And his whims, you say——

Mrs. Fl. To the last degree extravagant : Last week he supposed himself a young nestling crow, and constantly opened his mouth, like a bill, and cawed for food, when he found himself hungry.

Helle. A manifest mark of distraction !

Mrs. Fl. His whim of to-day is peculiar enough.

Helle. Of what kind ?

Mrs. Fl. He supposes himself a mercer upon Ludgate-Hill.

Helle. A mercer ?

Mrs. Fl. And that he has sold me a parcel of silks, for the payment of which I have conducted him hither.

Helle. Why, madam, we do now and then meet with extraordinary instances : But could not I see your uncle ?

Mrs. Fl. I brought him hither on purpose.

Helle. [*calling.*] Desire the gentleman below to walk up. Why, madam, the goodness of his health we look upon as a bad symptom, in these kind of of cases ; when they arise from a fever, why——

Mrs. Fl.

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Mrs. Fl. I hope there will be no occasion for violent remedies, such as correction, or straight waistcoats?

Helle. Not if he is tractable.

Mrs. Fl. But if that should not be the case, Sir?

Helle. The best way, ma'am, is to leave him to my care a little: I have a convenient house not far from town, where mad people are managed with greater advantage.

Mrs. Fl. I shall submit his treatment entirely to you.—But I suppose, Sir, it will be right for me to withdraw, as you may have some questions to ask him, improper for the ear of a lady. I will pay a short visit, now I am in this part of the town.

Helle. As you please, madam.—A discreet person! this does not seem to be a family complaint.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Fl. Here he is. I must humour him a little.

Enter Prig.

This gentleman, Sir, will settle our little affair. Depend upon it, I shall be with you soon. [*Exit.*

Prig. I shall wait for that honour with the greatest impatience.—She is a fine creter!

Helle. Come, Sir, take a chair.

Prig. Sir, there is no occasion.

Helle.

Helle. You had better, as I shall have a good many questions to ask you.—[*They sit.*] Well, Sir, and how do you find yourself?

Prig. Sir, you are very obliging! I am, I thank you, in very good health,

Helle. Don't you feel yourself at times inclined to be feverish?

Prig. Feverish! not I, Sir.

Helle. And have you had no material complaints, for any time back?

Prig. Not that I recollect; a slight touch of the *influenza*, indeed; but fared full as well as my neighbours.

Helle. And your appetite?

Prig. As usual; but I am at no time an over-great eater.

Helle. So much the better. Favour me with your hand, if you please.

Prig. Sir! [*Rises, and offers his hand.*]

Helle. Keep your seat, if you please.—[*Feels his pulse.*] Rather a little too lively! And as to your sleep now, is it continued or broken?

Prig. Sir!

Helle. Are your slumbers without interruption? have you no starts?

Prig. Not that I know of; indeed, I never was over-fond of my bed.

Helle. Ay, restless; I thought so.

Prig.

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Prig. Indeed, my business requires that I should be an early riser; when an apprentice, I was always the first in the shop.

Helle. An apprentice? poor man! but, however, I see no violent symptoms at present; a preparatory medicine, till we can put him into a regimen. Be seated! I will fetch you a draught that will immediately settle the business. [*Exit.*

Prig. A draft!—A draft on his banker, I reckon: Why could not he have given it me at first? An odd man! what the deuce has my health to do with my bill? Let us see; what is the tote? A hundred and ninety-two pounds, six, and—oh! here he is, I suppose, with the check.

Enter Hellebore, with a bottle and phial.

Helle. You will take this draught, three times a-day, at two hours' distance, first shaking it well.

Prig. Sir?

Helle. And nine drops of this, in a glass of water, first going to bed; it will serve to compose——

Prig. Compose? here must be some mistake in this matter! I fancy, Sir, you take me for somebody else—my name, Sir, is Prig; I keep the great mercer's shop, as you go up Ludgate——

Helle. Hum! very well, Sir.

Prig. And am come with the lady below, to be paid this here bill in my hand.

Hille.

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Helle. Oh, Sir, I am no stranger to the whole of that story: But how could you now—for, as you are cool at present, I will reason the matter a little—how could a man of your rank and fortune, indulge such an improbable whim?—I say a mercer indeed!

Prig. And pray, good Sir, who d'ye take me to be?

Helle. Oh, Sir, I know very well; your niece has fully informed me.

Prig. My niece? I have no niece, at least, not in London, I am sure.

Helle. No? what d'ye think of the lady who conducted you hither?

Prig. She my niece? Damn me, Sir, till this morning, if ever I set eyes on her! Sure——

Helle. Oh, ho! what, you are beginning to be violent: You had better be quiet, or I shall find a method to tame you.

Prig. Tame me, Sir? I don't understand what you would be at! Will you pay me my bill here, or not?

Helle. Your bill? poor creature!

Prig. Poor creter, Sir? none of your *poor creters* to me! follow your client's directions, and discharge me at once.

Helle. My client?

Prig. Ay, Sir. When money is in the case,
K a man

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a man may as well have to do with Old Nick; as a lawyer; there is no getting it out of their hands.

Helle. Oh, he takes me for a lawyer. The paroxism is exceedingly strong. Who is there? Order a coach, and let the three keepers convey him to Chelsea.

Enter Three Keepers.

Prig. Me to Chelsea? Let any body touch me that dare!

Helle. Ay, ay, we will see that.

Prig. This is some conspiracy, I suppose, to bam, to chouse me out of my money.

Helle. You will take him to Chelsea.

Prig. Hands off!

Helle. And, as you see he is violent, let him have the back room, with the barr'd windows, up two pair of stairs.

Prig. Me to Chelsea? me barr'd windows, and back room two-pair of stairs?

Helle. If the fit should encrease, put on the streight waistcoat. I shall call myself in the evening.

Prig. Let me go, gentlemen! This is a damn'd contrivance, to rob me! Unhand me, or you shall be all swing'd and fous'd! imprison a citizen, that only comes for his money? Damn me,

Jack

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Jack Wilkes's affair will be but a flea-bite to this!

[Keepers hurry him off.]

Helle. If this is the case, on with the waistcoat.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter Fleece'em and Flaw.

Flaw. Ha, ha, ha! poor Prig! in what a piteous plight have you left him!—But the Air-castles will all be here immediately, so take care we are not interrupted.

Mrs. Fl. As they are so exceedingly credulous, the business will soon be dispatched.

Flaw. In a trice. I have stipulated that your provision shall be secured before the solemnization.

Mrs. Fl. Right, right; perfectly right.

Flaw. But have you properly prepared the girl for the purpose?

Mrs. Fl. Her part will be easy.

Flaw. True; but she should be adroit; as events may arise, that will require some little skill: Who the deuce have you got?

Mrs. Fl. Why, I considered that as a very ticklish point; it would be dangerous to trust, and difficult to find in this town a suitable subject: Don't you think that the black girl I brought with me from Boston——

K 2

Flaw.

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Flaw. The negro? zounds, her complexion will betray her at once!

Mrs. Fl. I have thought of an expedient to secure us from that.

Flaw. It is true, these people have no great penetration; but what we do——

Mrs. Fl. Must quickly be done: I will just speak to the girl. [*Calls.*] Marianne!

Enter Marianne.

Mar. What you want, Missy?

Mrs. Fl. Go in and throw yourself on the bed; and, do you hear? let the window be shut, and the curtains drawn exceedingly close.

Mar. Yes, Missy.

Mrs. Flee. And whoever speaks to you, don't you chatter and talk, but sigh now and then, as if you were sick: You will be only asked a question or two; as, *if you are ill?* or *are better?* to which you need say nothing but yes.

Mar. Nothing but *ifs*. I take care, Missy, never you fear,

Mrs. Flee. And, Marianne, no candle!

Mar. No, no, Missy. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Fl. Oh, she will answer our purpose, I warrant: Besides, unless they are very pressing to see her, there will be no occasion to produce her at all.

Flaw.

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Flaw. But, I beg your pardon, there will: by my directions, the son is provided with presents, with a view to propitiate his Venus.

Mrs. Fl. [*rap at the door.*] There they are! Mr. Flaw, you will receive them? It will be right for me to retire, to see if all things within are in order. [*Exit.*

Enter Aircraftle, Mrs. Aircraftle, and Toby.

Air. I tell you the boy is an absolute fight, and I should not wonder if the young lady was to——

Mrs. Air. You wonder? and pray who made you a judge of the proper——

Flaw. Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake, hush! consider where you are!

Air. She is at her old tricks, Mr. Flaw; there is no——

Flaw. A key lower, good Sir, if you please! You will frighten the family.

Air. By her good will, I should never open my mouth, but to eat.

Mrs. Air. I know but little else that it's good for.

Flaw. Nay, madam, now you are as faulty as he. Only think what a strange impression this will make on the ladies within! I beg you will suspend your warfare a while.

Mrs. Air. Well, well!

Flaw.

Flaw. And no contradiction, I beg; but be attentive and polite to each other, as people of fashion should be: You may renew hostilities, and make up for lost time, as soon as you are out of the house.

Mrs. Air. Why, how is it my fault, Mr. Flaw?

Air. Nor shall it be mine: For man and wife to quarrel before folks is rather rudish, I own; by ourselves, indeed, it is a pretty innocent amusement enough—Tom Testy, of our town, used to say—his wife was a Devonshire girl; if I am not mistaken, from Plymouth—where, by the bye, they have the best John Dories in England—Old Quin, one summer, went thither on purpose——

Flaw. And if, Mr. Aircastle, you would contract your conversation a little—To be sure, your manner is pleasing, and your matter full of instruction; but as we meet upon business—

Air. I believe you are right, Mr. Flaw. Come, my love; let us shew him how polite we can be, if we please.—Dear Mrs. Aircastle, how I admire your taste! these here skirts of the boy's are so light and genteel, and so airy—

Mrs. Air. True; I am happy, my dear, that I have your approbation: Those we got made in the country, trapes and dangle like a parcel of petticoats,

Air,

Air. Right, my love.—For all the world, like a Hounslow post-boy! His whole figure is just like a spider, nothing but legs; a mere couple of stilts!—And then that top to his wig, my dear child——

Mrs. Air. Gives a fashionable turn to his face; and then adds to the height.

Air. It has indeed, my soul, a prodigious happy effect.—A block, popping out of a hair-cutter's window, up two pair of stairs in the Strand.—And then that bunch at his back——

Flaw. Hush! here comes the lady.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em.

This, madam, is the family for whom I told you I had so warm an affection; and this the young gentleman whose alliance I recommend for Miss.

Mrs. Air. Grace, Toby!

Mrs. Fl. I make no doubt, madam, but my niece will think herself happy in an union with so accomplished a person.

Air. Why, as to that, Toby, Mrs. —— what is the gentlewoman's name?

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'em.

Air. I recollect, madam, going some years ago with one of that name in the stage-coach to York—we were overturned about a mile beyond Newark—the parson of the parish—he became

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became afterwards a prebend of Worcester, in the room of old Walter Wench'em, who was cast in a suit of *crim. con.* by Sir Timothy Tallyhoe, remarkable for the best pack of hounds in the country——

Mrs. Air. For Heaven's sake, Mr. Aircastle!

Flaw. Have a care! you have forgot.

Air. I am dumb.

Mrs. Fl. Pray, madam, has the young gentleman travelled?

Mrs. Air. Who? Toby?

Air. Why, madam, I did once intend—but Sir Roger Ramble—who I am told will be strongly opposed next election, for the borough of Barnstaple, by Sir Walter Win'em—who during the whole time of Sir Robert Walpole's admin——

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, I beg pardon, but the lady directed the question to me.

Air. True, my angel; and I am sure nobody can give a better answer than dear Mrs. Aircastle——

Mrs. Air. You are very polite.

Air. But I was willing to save you the trouble, my soul.

Mrs. Air. I shall think it no trouble to satisfy the lady's enquiries.

Mrs. Fl. Nay, it was a matter of curiosity only:—There is, besides, an elegance, a *je ne*
scai

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scai quoi, in your son's air, that is rarely acquired in this country.

Mrs. Air. Did not I tell you the prodigious power of grace?

Air. Yes; but I could never have believed it.

Mrs. Air. Pray, madam, is the young lady at home?

Mrs. Fl. Just lain down for a little: The change of climate has given her a slight indisposition; but a few days, I dare say, will restore her.

Mrs. Air. Miss, I presume, has a physician?

Air. A what? a physician, my life, for a little sea-sickness? Why, doctor Diet, at Margate, who, by the bye, intends to settle in London—his aunt, major Mortar's widow—who was killed by a bomb at the taking of Goree—Tom Truant, an old schoolfellow of mine, was close by his side—Tom Tru——

Mrs. Air. Dear Mr. Aircastle, what has all this to do with the young lady's illness?

Air. I was coming to that, my soul, if you will let me. I don't know how it happens; in general, nobody is better bred than Mrs. Aircastle; but to-day she won't let me bring out a word.—So, madam, Tom Truant, as I was—

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, I must interrupt you!

L

Air.

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Air. You must?

Mrs. Air. I can't suffer it, upon this lady's account.

Air. It was for her sake, my soul, I was speaking.—So, madam, Tom Truant——

Mrs. Air. If you persist, I shall quit the house, I assure you!

Air. Quit the house?

Mrs. Air. This very instant!

Air. Zounds, madam, if you come to that, you may go to the——

Mrs. Air. Any where to get rid of your absurd——

Air. For that matter, you can't be more willing than I.

Mrs. Air. Then, madam, I take my leave.

Air. When you will: This lady and I can easily settle matters without you.—So, madam, as I was saying, Tom Tru——

Flaw. For Heaven's sake, Sir!—Mrs. Air-castle, be calm!—when things are just bringing to bear——

Air. All I meant was for the service of Miss.

Mrs. Fl. Very obliging, indeed. I should be sorry if any difference should arise on my niece's account; Besides, her illness is so trifling, that the young gentleman may, if he pleases, step into her room to enquire after her health.

Mrs.

Mrs. Air. Toby will be very happy, I am sure. You see, madam, what the lad is.

Mrs. Fl. A most agreeable youth, I must own; and then his silence is a modest mark of his merit.

Air. Do you hear that, Mrs. Air——

Mrs. Air. Yes; and I hope it will make a proper impression on you.—You, doubtless, madam, know the taste of your niece; may we hope that Toby has any chance of succeeding?

Mrs. Fl. She was prodigiously pleased with Mr. Flaw's account of his parents; which, indeed, I now find to be true in every respect.

Air. and Mrs. Air. Oh, madam!

Mrs. Fl. And as to fortune, she is totally careless in that, her own being much more than sufficient.

Air. How manly that is in a woman!—I remember Miss Patty Plumb of Jamaica did the very same—they say her grandfather was transported for robbing a hen-roost——

Mrs. Air. But as to his figure, madam; do you apprehend it will strike her? Toby, hold up your head!

Mrs. Fl. I can see no reason against it: Indeed, the young gentleman has rather a fairer complexion than what she has been commonly used

to; the natives of India, from their climate, have rather a fallower hue.

Mrs. Air. True, madam.

Mrs. Fl. But, if necessary, that may be easily altered by art; some saffron, or snuff, just skimmed over his face——

Mrs. Air. Quickly!

Air. I have a box of Scotch in my pocket: It may be done in an instant.

Mrs. Fl. Their hair, too, is most commonly dark; but a little German blacking here on each of the eyebrows——

Toby. If a burnt cork will do, I have one in my pocket.

Air. Mr. Flaw, will you ring for a candle?

Mrs. Fl. There is no necessity now: We have been obliged to shut out the light, as her eyes are rather tender and weak, with looking so long on nothing but water.

Mrs. Air. True, madam. Well, madam, we will detain you no longer: I am sure it is impossible to say how much we are obliged——you may rely upon it, we shall ever be grateful.

Mrs. Fl. I don't in the least doubt it: Mr. Flaw has, I presume, hinted my situation?

Mrs. Air. Most minutely: Mr. Aircastle has prepared the deposit. You have the needful?

Air.

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Air. All but five hundred pounds, which you may have in the evening: I lent it just now to a—the story will make you laugh, I am sure: As I was going out, colonel—who commanded last war——

Mrs. Air. Is this a time for a story?

Flaw. Fy, fy! dispatch, Mr. Aircastle!

Mrs. Air. Here all the bills are.

Flaw. Nay, hold a little, I beg! This, you know, is a kind of compact; there are conditions to be performed on both sides: Therefore the money should, I think, be lodged in neutral hands, till the material point is complied with.

Mrs. Air. There is no occasion.

Mrs. Fl. I can have no objection, I am sure: where then shall we place it?

Mrs. Air. Mr. Flaw is a friend to both parties——

Air. True; the properest man in the world.

Mrs. Fl. I am not quite so certain of that.

[*Aside.*

Air. There, there the bills are, Mr. Flaw.

Mrs. Air. Now we will leave Toby and the lady together.

Air. Toby, don't forget to deliver the presents.

Toby. I have them here in a box.

Air. Mind your behaviour, my good lad!—I wish we had time though to doctor his face:

Against

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Against their next meeting, I will do it myself; I will manage that matter, I warrant: I learnt the art last autumn of a parcel of strollers—they had been playing, during the Dog-days, with one Foote in this town—a fellow, they say, takes people off, and——

Mrs. Air. Nay, Mr. Aircastle, come along, I beseech you!

Air. Well, well! you are always in such a damnable hurry!

Mrs. Fl. Mr. Flaw; you are not going, I hope? because I wanted just to speak a few words——

Flaw. I shall be back in a minute.

[*Exeunt Flaw, Mr. and Mrs. Aircastle.*]

Mrs. Fl. This, Sir, this is the door; tread softly.

Toby. Had not I better pull off my shoes?

Mrs. Fl. No occasion for that. [*Exit.*]

Another room. Marianne in bed.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em and Toby.

Mrs. Fl. This way! your hand!—Letty, my dear, the young gentleman I mentioned to you this morning, begs just to enquire after your health. There; I will leave you together: She is in the bed at the upper end of the room. I make no doubt, Sir, but you will behave with proper decorum.

[*Exit.*
Toby.]

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Toby. If you are afraid, you need not go out of the room.—The place is as dark as a dungeon! Upper end of the room! and how the deuce should I know which that is? in the night, I can tell you, I should be a good deal frightened to be so much in the dark, but it is well enough in the day, when one is about to make love; because why, one is not so bashful and shy; one can see to speak one's mind with more boldness and courage, than in the light.—*Me--Miss!* I thought she had spoke; may be not. If I could but get hold of the curtains—the best way will be to creep close by the wall, then I shall be sure to—*Miss! Miss!*

Mar. Who be dat dere?

Toby. I.—*Dat dere?* one may find out by her tongue she is a foreigner; I am pretty right now, I believe. What, *Miss*, are you sick?

Mar. *Iss.*

Toby. But you are better, I hope?

Mar. *Iss.*

Toby. I am glad on't: Then I suppose, *Miss*, if you please, I may begin to make love?

Mar. *Iss.*

Toby. *Iss?* gad, I think it is ready made to my hands,—Did the gentlewoman, *Mrs. Madam* your aunt, say any thing about and concerning of me?

Mar.

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Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Is it a secret?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Oh, then it would not be manners to ax: Well, Miss, I hope you ben't averse to the match?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Adzooks, then we are all off in an instant! What, Miss, I suppose you ben't willing to have me?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Oh, then we are on again, as before: Then I may produce, I believe. I have brought you, Miss, some curiosities, by way of presentation, here in my pocket: Will you please to accept——

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. Here, then, I offer them up to the shrine of thy beauty. May I crave leave to kiss your lily-white hand?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby. On my knees let me thank you, fairest creature!—Her skin is vast soft. They be wonderful pretty things I have brought you; a'n't you mighty curious to see them?

Mrs. Ifs.

Toby. May I draw up the curtain a bit, only just to give you glimpse?

Mar. Ifs.

Toby.

Toby. So I will.—I should be glad to have a peep at her too; she is a mighty agreeable body; does not talk much, indeed; but is vast sensible, whatever she says. This, I believe, is the string. I wonder if she is as handsome as Betsy Blossom: Gad, if she is, Miss Blossom must look out for somebody else, I can tell her. That's high enough, I believe.—That there thing in the leather-case is a watch; if you touch the knob that juts out, it strikes all the world like a clock; mother has one, but then him is as big as a warming-pan. Perhaps, Miss, you mayn't find the trick out; I'll shew you.—Hey! what is this? Lord have mercy on me! she is turned all of a sudden as black as a crow! sure as can be, a judgment for forsaking poor Betsy.

Mar. Massa, won't you come here?

Toby. Not I.

Mar. I come to you, den.

Toby. The devil you will! you must run pretty fast then.—Keep off me! holloa! house! stop the black thing that is hard at my—— [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em.

Mrs. Fl. The rude puppy had like to have run over me: What is the meaning—Ha, the curtain drawn up? nay then—Marianne, who opened the window?

M

Mar.

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Mar. Little Massa, to shew me de tick-tick—

Mrs. Fl. Fool, did not I tell you—But it was my own fault, to trust such an idiot! Go, get out of my sight! [Exit *Mar.*

Enter Flaw.

Flaw. What the deuce is the matter? Toby is scampered down the street as if he had a legion of——

Mrs. Fl. Matter? why he has discovered the wench.

Flaw. 'Sdeath! I told you the folly of trusting these—we shall all be blown up in an instant: I saw the mother stop her chariot at the sight of the whelp; so I suppose we shall have her back in a——

Mrs. Fl. Ay? then something must be suddenly done.

Flaw. Done! but what?—I'll run after the boy, and hear his account of the matter.

Mrs. Fl. Stay! had not you better, Mr. Flaw, just leave with me Mr. Aircastle's deposit?

Flaw. Pho! time enough; is this a season to settle accounts? [Exit.

Mrs. Fl. So! I suppose he will march off with the money at last: I would have done as much, if I could but have touched it.

Enter Mrs. Aircastle.

Mrs. Air. Dear madam, I am in the utmost
con-

confusion ! I am afraid that wild boy has misbehaved himself in some manner or other.

Mrs. Fl. A little mistake, madam ; but I protest my niece is so terrified, that she is unable to give me any account——

Mrs. Air. Some rude prank of his, I dare say ; I never could get his father——

Enter Colonel Gorget.

Gorget. The house is in such confusion, that I can't get any body to give me an answer.—
Mrs. Aircastle !

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Colonel Gorget ! who thought of meeting you here ?

Gorget. An odd affair ; but this lady, I suppose, Mrs. Fleece'em, will be so kind to explain it. A pretty young lad, an ensign of mine, has, I am afraid, been tricked out of a large sum of money by one Flaw, a fellow of very bad fame.

Mrs. Air. How ! Flaw ?

Gorget. Under pretence of gaining promotion by this lady's assistance.

Mrs. Fl. Mine, Sir ? I promise you this is the first mention I ever heard of the matter.

Gorget. Just, Madam, as I suspected : But pray, Mrs. Aircastle, have you long had the honour of this lady's acquaintance ?

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Mrs. Air. Acquaintance? Lord, colonel, I am terrified out of my wits. Your ear for a moment.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. A note, madam, which you are desired directly to read.

Mrs. Fl. Flaw's hand. [*Reads*]. "The game is up—we are blown—make off as fast as you can." As matters stand, the best advice I can take. [*Going off.*]

Mrs. Air. Madam, you are not going to leave us?

Mrs. Fl. Only just to enquire how my niece does after her fright: I shall be back immediately. [*Exit.*]

Gorget. How! is it possible? a capital sum? Good Heavens, madam, and how could you trust it without consulting some friend?

Mrs. Air. Why, we both thought Mr. Flaw—

Gorget. Flaw? an infamous—

Enter Mr. Aircraftle.

Air. Why, what the deuce has been the matter amongst you? They tell me Toby has been at home frightened out of his wits; and then run out directly with the waiter and some wench or other:

I have

I have sent your Roger in search of the whelp.—
Ah, colonel, are you there?

Gorget. Came the minute before you.

Air. Well, colonel, hey, how? What, I suppose, by being here so soon, your affair has miscarried.

Gorget. You are mistaken indeed, my good friend.

Mrs. Air. What affair?

Air. I forgot to tell it you, child: Of a fine lass in this town, that sets up her person for sale——

Mrs. Air. How!

Air. And had the modesty to fix the price to the colonel at five hundred guineas.

Mrs. Air. Abominable! Can there be such creatures?

Air. Ask the colonel; that is all: An infamous harpy!

Gorget. Dear Mr. Aircraftle, you are here in an error.

Air. Error? why, did not you tell me of a line she sent you?

Gorget. Very true.

Air. And did not I advance the cash?

Gorget. Do I pretend to deny it?

Air. Well then?

Gorget. Your patience a moment, my dear friend! I gave her the money, it is true,——

Air.

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Air. There, Mrs. Aircastle! did not I tell you——

Gorget. But then, like a woman of honour——

Air. Well?

Gorget. She told me that she did it but to try the strength of my passion——

Air. Pho, pho!

Gorget. And so immediately returned it again.

Air. Pshaw! a bam, Mrs. Aircastle; don't believe it, my dear!

Gorget. To put the matter out of dispute, I returned to your lodging directly; when, not finding you, I delivered the cash to your lady.

Air. Indeed?

Gorget. In the very individual bag that you gave me; and before Master Toby, your son.

Air. Ay? and have you got the money, my dear?

Mrs. Air. Yes, yes; I received it.—Was ever woman so duped! but this town is full of Cozeners. [*Aside.*]

Gorget. I am afraid, Mr. Aircastle, that it was pretty lucky for you I happened to have the cash in my hand.

Air. Lucky? I don't understand——

Gorget. Otherwise, it might have flown away with the rest.

Air. Flown away?

Gorget.

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Gorget. By what Mrs. Aircraftle has told me, I shrewdly suspect you are got into the hands of some villainous sharpers.

Air. How!

Gorget. Mr. Flaw, and his coadjutrix.—Within! who's there?—But we shall soon get the business explained.

Enter a Servant.

Gorget. Do you live with the person who inhabits this house?

Serv. But a very short time.

Gorget. We wish to see her directly.

Serv. She is gone out.

Gorget. I thought so: And her niece too, I suppose?

Serv. Her niece, Sir?

Gorget. Ay.

Serv. I know no niece she has.

Air. and Mrs. Air. How!

Gorget. Just as I suspected: Now, Sir, do you begin to find what a situation you are in?

Air. Then I am totally ruined! I told you, Mrs. Aircraftle, what would come of your—I remember Martin Moneytrap, of the Minorities, was once in the very same way—he was taken in by a Portuguese Jew——

Gorget. A truce to recrimination, I beg! we
have

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have more material business in hand: Let this woman be directly pursued; and endeavour to recover at least a part of——

O'Flan. [*without.*] Pray step in a bit, if you please, and refund freely the bill; or, upon my soul, I'll make you do me the favour by force!

Enter O'Flannagan with Mrs. Fleece'em.

All. Mrs. Fleece'em?

O'Flan. Yes, yes; it is, sure enough; she overtook me, as I met her hard by.

Gorget. We are obliged to you then for the lady's return?

O'Flan. You may say that: I stopped her just in the nick, as she was sily walking off in a coach. Arrah, put off your hood, my dear honey; don't be shame-faced amongst your friends and acquaintance.

Mrs. Fl. Stand off, you rude brute!

O'Flan. Better words, if you please! You wanted to send me to be feathered abroad; so, in return, I shall beg lave, madam, to pluck you at home.

Gorget. No violence to the lady I beg, Sir! she now finds she is detected, and, I dare say, will do every body all the justice she can. And, first, madam, as to the capital sum which you had the address to obtain from this——

Mrs.

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Mrs. Fl. What concern have I in the business? the gentleman himself gave it into the possession of Flaw.

Gorget. Mr. Aircraftle!

Air. That's true, I confess.

Gorget. But, since that, has not the property suffered a transfer?

Mrs. Fl. Not to me: But if you doubt it, you may search the house when you please.

Gorget. Then it has got into worse hands, I'm afraid.

Enter Mrs. Simony.

Mrs. Sim. I see by their confusion my information was right.—Not to interrupt you, madam, I should take it as a particular favour if you would immediately return the little note I left in your hands—for I have not a moment to spare.

Mrs. Fl. Note, madam? what note? I recollect, indeed, a hymn that you——

Mrs. Sim. Well, madam, that hymn, if you please.

Mrs. Fl. I gave it directly to Flaw, to get a friend of his to set it to musick.

Mrs. Sim. Musick? Ladies and gentlemen, a bank-note, I protest!

N

Air.

Air. What! set a bank-note to musick? I never heard of such a thing.

Gorget. And pray, madam, what could induce you to trust that woman with a bank-note?

Mrs. Fl. That she will not so readily own; a little earnest of a much larger bribe, to procure her husband a living.

Gorget. How, madam! I hope your husband was not apprised of this application?

Mrs. Sim. The Doctor was totally ignorant; knew nothing about it.

Gorget. I am very happy to hear it: I should be sorry to find that a gentleman, whose peculiar duty it is to sustain the purity of his profession, should himself be the very person to soil it; or that an office of so sacred a nature, should be solicited by such un sanctified means.

Mrs. Sim. I believe my Doctor, Sir, will be hardly suspected: But I have not time to say more for the present; I shall be stay'd for, and have not a moment to spare. [Exit.

Gorget. Let her go! that plunder, however, is fair.

Air. Well, well! but, colonel, notwithstanding all that you say, I have heard there was a bet once made between the patron of a living and one Parson Plurality—Plurality had been

THE COZENERS. 91

been a Presbyterian—his father keeps a pastry-cook's shop in Spring-gardens—just where Cox's Museum—by the bye, they tell me, Cox will get devilish rich by his lottery.

Gorget. But if we don't use some dispatch, I am afraid you will get devilish poor.

Enter Prig, in a waistcoat and cap.

Prig. Where is this damn'd infernal—the is burrow'd here, but I'll make her——

Air. Who the deuce can this be?

Mrs. Fl. Some madman escaped from his keepers, I reckon.

Prig. Yes, yes, I am escaped! but not mad: and if there is law to be had, I'll make you to know—keepers!—if I had not luckily met with some friends at the turnpike, I should have been kept pretty close, I believe. I recollected your footman that stood at the door, and guess'd you were not far off.

Air. What is this? a madman? I went to see one once in Bedlam—he—

[*Exit Prig.*

Enter Roger.

Air. Oh, here is Roger. Well, did you find where Toby is?

Roger. Yes, yes, I found un out; and in sweet company too.

Mrs. Air. Company?

Roger. A clergyman, Betsy Blossom, and our waiter at home,

Air. Zounds! I hope the boy is not married.

Roger. No; but they would have been, if I had not come just in the nick to fetch un away.

Air. Where is he?

Roger. In a shop at the corner. I wanted un to step over; but he would not, because why, he says as how the house is haunted.

Air. And why not? There was the manor-house in the parish of Paddington—Mrs. Air-castle, you may remember it formerly belonged to the Jessops; but, by the marriage of the heiress with one of the Haslewoods——

Gorget. Come, come, it is a lucky prevention; and, to give you a little consolation, I believe I shall be able to recover your money from Flaw.

Mrs. Air. and Air. How, colonel?

Gorget. I took the liberty, by way of prevention, to get him secured for the money received of my ensign.

Air. Indeed?

Gorget. And, as this affair is rather of a criminal nature, he will think himself happy to escape by restoring the plunder.

Air. My kind colonel!

Gorget. I hope, madam, this will make you
amends

amends for your disappointment in the five hundred pounds. [Aside.

O'Flan. But what the divil is all this to my bill?

Gorget. Did this woman receive it?

Mrs. Fl. Flaw had it; but it wants some days of being due.

Gorget. Then we shall be able to stop the payment, at least; it is safe, never fear.

O'Flan. That's lucky, however: And, by all I can hear, my best way, Mr. Colonel, will be to make an emigration back to Ireland again.

Gorget. By all means; and, by this time, many more of your countrymen would, I believe, be glad to follow your steps.

O'Flan. Like enough.

Air. And if, Mrs. Aircastle, we were to return back again——

Gorget. It would be the wisest thing you could do.

Mrs. Air. What, to vegetate, like a parcel of plants?

Gorget. Ay, madam; for there are trees that won't bear transplanting; they thrive best in their natural soil.

Air. That's true, I can answer. Last summer, I transplanted some elm-trees——

Gorget. Lord! Mr. Aircastle, how can you——

Air.

Air. Zounds! I must n't speak—Sir, let me tell you the story of the elm. [to O'Flan.]

Gorget. You, madam, till you have made all the satisfaction you can, must be contented to suffer a little confinement; after which, unless your country should have some other call upon you, you may dispose of yourself as you please.

Mrs. Fl. I am detected, distressed, and must therefore submit! But, gentlemen, if all who have offended like us, were like us produced to the public, much higher names would adorn the Old-Bailey Chronicle than those of poor Fleece'em and Flaw!

F I N I S.

In the Press, and will be published in a few Days,

The C O M E D I E S of

The Maid of Bath,

A N D

The Devil Upon Two Sticks ;

Both written by the same Author,

And published by the same Editor.

In the Press and will be published in a few days.

THE COMMISSIONERS

THE MIND OF THE

A. D. 1840

The British Open Two Weeks

Both written by the same Author

and published by the same Publisher

